

Why be Water Wise in your Garden?

Save Water & Money

Did you know that approximately half the water you use at your home is for your garden? You can reduce outside water use by 20 to 40 percent by following the steps outlined in this brochure.

Reduce Maintenance

A water wise garden means a low maintenance garden. By following the principles of a water wise garden, you can reduce pruning, weeding and pest control tasks, leaving more time to enjoy your garden and reducing maintenance costs.

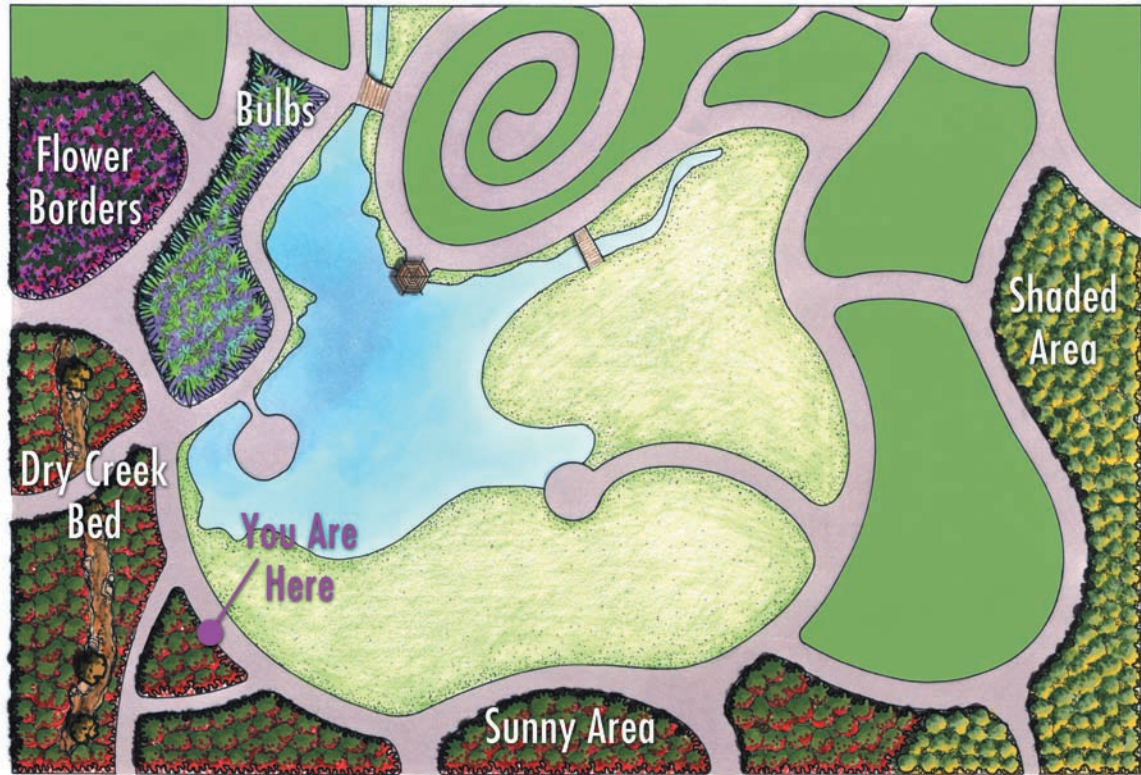
Appropriate For Our Climate

We live in a semi-arid climate. Water is a precious resource and in limited supply in California. Much of California, including Santa Barbara, has a Mediterranean climate typified by warm dry summers and cool moist winters. Well-designed, water wise gardens provide lush outdoor living spaces that thrive on a minimum of water and maintenance. And by design, they are imbued with a sense of place... a garden appropriate to the sunny, Mediterranean climate in which we live.

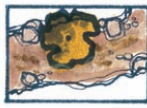
The water wise demonstration garden portion of the park is depicted on this diagram, though you will find many plants in other areas of the garden that are water wise as well.

Garden Tour:

- 1.) Take a plant list from the dispenser located next to the interpretive sign.
- 2.) As you walk through the garden, look for plant labels. The letters correspond with the bed and the numbers correspond with the specific plant on the list.



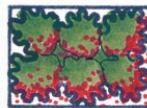
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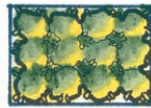
dry creek bed
Bed B & D



bulbs &
groundcovers
Bed C



sunny area
Bed E, F, G



shaded area
Bed H & I

flower borders
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Efficient Irrigation

An essential component of landscaping.

Plants and soil are good indicators of when to water. Even though the soil surface is dry, it may still be moist where plant roots are located. Use a soil probe: If the soil is moist at the root zone, there is no need to water.



Use the online landscape watering calculator

You can easily determine how much and how often to water your garden by using the landscape watering calculator at SaveWaterSB.org. Just enter your zip code, soil type, plants, and sprinklers into the calculator and it will provide you with a watering schedule.

Adjust your schedule with the weather

The “water budget” or “seasonal adjust” feature on your sprinkler timer lets you easily change your watering schedule as the weather changes. To know what to set your “water budget” to, check the weekly Watering Index at SaveWaterSB.org.

Smart irrigation controllers

Smart irrigation controllers automatically calculate and adjust the irrigation schedule using local weather data and your plant and soil type, thus providing the right amount of water to maintain healthy growing conditions.

Install a rain sensor

Rain sensors are easily attached to sprinkler timers to automatically shut off your irrigation system during, and immediately after, a rain event.

Change your sprinkler heads to rotating nozzles

Rotating nozzles for pop-up spray heads apply water more slowly and uniformly, using 20% less water.

Change the battery in your sprinkler timer

If the backup battery is dead in your sprinkler timer, a power outage will cause your schedule to reset to “default,” watering about twice as much as necessary. Replace the battery at least once a year.



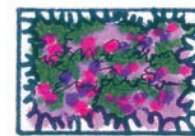
Design Areas

Throughout this demonstration garden are different design areas and microclimates, which are described below.



Bulbs and Groundcovers

Most bulbs put on a spectacular show and then die back for a good portion of the year. To provide year-round interest, include a groundcover through which the bulbs can grow each season. When they finish their show, the bulbs collect energy for the next season as the foliage dries and turns brown. Groundcovers will minimize the unsightly foliage during this important phase.



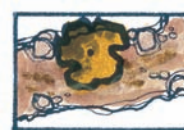
Flower Borders

A well-designed flower border is one in which plants with staggered blooming times provide at least two peak bloom phases each year. Evergreen shrubs and groundcovers, carefully placed, give skeletal structure to the border and provide intermittent color in those few periods when the big bloomers are in their resting phase.



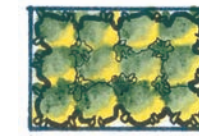
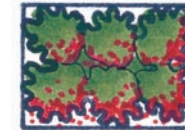
Dry Creek Bed

In gardens that have seasonal drainage areas, a dry creek bed can be used to channel the water through the garden, preventing it from washing away valuable mulch and topsoil. Plants that tolerate occasional “wet feet”, like Juncus (*Juncus patens*) and Cape Rush (*Chondropetalum tectorum*), work well on the edges of the creek bed. These plants also tolerate the dry summer months when no water runs through the creek.



Sunny Area

Just as there are plants that tolerate varying degrees of shade, not all sun-loving plants tolerate the hot afternoon sun of a south or west facing exposure, or the intensity of reflected heat from a wall. The key to a successful sunny garden is, again, learning the needs and tolerances of the plants. Remember to group your plants, sun-loving or shade loving, according to their water needs, so that you avoid over-watering many to maintain one water-hungry plant in their midst.



Shaded Area

This garden's shady areas vary from bright shade to very deep shade. Plants that are found in such areas appreciate the cooler air and soil temperatures and the fact that their water supply evaporates less quickly. There are plants that will grow happily in dappled shade, but languish and weaken in deep shade. So it pays to do your research when choosing your shade garden plant palette.



For more information on water wise landscaping, go to SaveWaterSB.org, or call 564-5460.

Produced by:

City of Santa Barbara Public Works and Parks and Recreation Departments

WATER WISE

DEMONSTRATION GARDEN



Alice Keck Park
MEMORIAL GARDEN